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JOYFUL DAY

On August 6/19 we celebrate the feast of the Transfiguration. It can be found in three of the Gospels: St. Matthew 17:1-9; St. Mark 9:2-10; and in St. Luke 9:28-36. During the Divine Liturgy the reading is from the Gospel of St. Matthew.

On this day, Jesus took three of His closest disciples, Peter, James and John, up onto a mountain to pray. While Jesus was praying, His appearance changed. His clothes turned a bright white and a brightness shown all around Him. Suddenly, Moses and Elijah, two ancient prophets long since dead, appeared and spoke with Jesus.

When His disciples saw this spectacle, Peter said one of his famous lines: "Lord, it is good for us to be here." Peter hoped to build a shelter for Jesus, Moses and Elijah and stay there forever; but just as they had appeared, Moses and Elijah disappeared. Suddenly a cloud overshadowed them all and the voice of God, the Father was heard: "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased hear ye him."

This reading has great meaning for us. There are many messages to receive from the Transfiguration. It is a story of Jesus' revelation of glory; His showing us a little glimpse of heaven. It's a story of transformation.

The Gospels say that during the transfiguration Jesus' face changed appearance, His clothes became dazzlingly bright, and His glory shown forth. Perhaps the word "change" is not such a good one here. Change denotes a transformation from one thing to another as if the new appearance didn't exist before. Maybe a better word is

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THE LIGHT OF TRANSFIGURATION

In articles about the Transfiguration, the light in which Jesus was enveloped, is described by many words. But they all fall short – there are no words to describe "the light." St. Gregory Palamas, who we remember on the second Sunday of Great Lent, was known for his study of the Divine Light.

St. Gregory (+1359) defended the traditional teaching on the Lord's Transfiguration against the attacks of some rationalist theologians. He understood how necessary it was to give full value to the importance of this evangelical event for Christian dogma and spirituality. "God is called Light," he wrote, "not according to His Essence but according to His Energy." The Light which illumined the Apostles was not something sensible, but on the other hand it is equally false to see it an intelligible reality which would be called "light" only metaphorically.

The Divine Light is neither material nor spiritual for it transcends the order of the created, it is the "ineffable splendor of the one nature in three hypostases."

The light of the Lord's Transfiguration had no beginning and no end; it remained uncircumscribed (in time and space) and imperceptible to the senses, although it was contemplated with bodily eyes...but by a transmutation of their senses the disciples of the Lord passed from flesh to the Spirit.

...Christ appears as the Lord of the living and the dead, coming in the glory of the future age.

The Transfiguration was "an

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THE CELEBRATION

In most parishes the blessing of fruit on Transfiguration is the only "difference" from most Holy Days. Very few people observe the day. However, on Mount Athos the monks gather from their monasteries, Kellias and sketes at the highest peak. Here in a small chapel, which has so little room, that most of the monks must stand outside beside a large fire to give them some semblance of warmth. They can hear the voices of the chanters who become the trumpets of the church, proclaiming the message of the eternal light to the ends of the earth.

At the break of dawn, following the Divine Liturgy and a simple breakfast, each monk heads down the mountain full of joy and in silence. When Moses descended from Sinai (Exodus 34:30) the glory of God was reflected on his face, likewise that glory is now reflected in the hearts of the monks.

For those on Mount Athos, the feast is not simply a commemoration of a past event. Rather it represents the entire mystery of Christ of whom each has become a bearer by having partaken of Holy Communion. They come down with Jesus, having been clothed with Jesus.

They come down with Jesus, being satisfied with the Bread of Life and their ceaseless calling upon His Name.

And so they continue fortified on their path towards the celestial Jerusalem in their monastery, skete or kellia.

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News CHRONOLOGY

AUGUST 2008

DIED: Matushka MaryAnne **Bohush** in Philadelphia, PA, wife of Fr. John D. Bohush

Matushka Alexandra **Lukashonak,** in Glebville, IL, widow of Fr. Cyril Lukashonak

Father Gregory **Szyrynski** in West Sacramento, CA

AMERICA'S HOLY MOUNTAIN is an 88-minute documentary tracing the history of St. Tikhon's Monastery in So. Canaan, PA, which recently celebrated its 100th year. It can be ordered in DVD or VHS format at $20 plus $4 postage from Grisha Pictures, 3620 Cloverfield Road, Harrisburg, PA 17109-2540. Did you know that the original church dedicated to the Dormition was destroyed by an arsonist? An icon written by Fr. Gregory will be placed in a kivot made by George Walko and placed at the site which was recently discovered.

THOUSANDS OF PILGRIMS who gathered at the Jordan River on the Holy Day of the Baptism of Christ on January 19 were not allowed immersion in the waters this year. They were prevented by Israel Security.

WICCANS now have the right to have the pentacle engraved on veterans' headstones. The Wiccan pentacle, a five-pointed star inside a circle, is often confused with symbols of Satanism. (The five points of the star represent the elements of nature – earth, air, fire, water and spirit, within the eternal circle of life.) Wicca – a form of paganism – is one of the country's fastest growing religions. Many practice some form of magic or witchcraft, which they say is a way of affecting their destiny.

ON 3 AUGUST MANY PARISHES HOLD A SPECIAL REMEMBRANCE FOR THOSE who lost their lives in Talerhof. Talerhof was a concentration camp located in Austria. Hundreds of Orthodox Lemkos were uprooted and imprisoned here during the WW I.

THE 2008 ANNUAL CONFERENCE of Orthodox Christian Association of Medicine, Psychology and Religion will be held at the Holy Cross Seminary campus in Brookline, MA on Nov. 7-8. The focus will be on End of Life Care. Registration forms and info can be found on the OCAMPR website at www.ocampr.org

ORTHODOX SERBS IN KOSOVO find it difficult to visit the graves of their deceased at cemeteries which are now located in ethnic Albanian communities. It is now only possible to go to pray and light a candle at a grave of a loved one if accompanied by police escort. 80% of the Orthodox gravestones have been vandalized.

CZAR NICHOLAS II had built a unique wooden summer residence in Georgia for his brother, who suffered from tuberculosis. The construction was unique as no nails were used in building it. It burned recently and there is some talk of restoring it.

THE CHURCH OF GREECE'S HOLY SYNOD issued a statement against the new law passed by the government which allows unmarried couples to make their relationship official and legally binding by simply signing a simple notarial contract. This would give each partner the same rights as if the couple were married.

THE DECREE MADE by Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko transferring the KievPechersk Monastery to the state has met with opposition.

THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY of the creation of "The Alley of Russian Poets and Composers," located near the Russian Embassy in Washington, was recently observed. Included are Pushkin and Pasternak among many others.

IN 1988 RECORDINGS OF "Songs of the Russian Imperial Army" were made as sung by two Russian American choirs. These have now been reproduced on a disk in St. Petersburg and can be obtained for $15 plus postage from Holy Trinity Monastery, PO Box 35, Jordanville, NY 13361. For info call: 315/858-0940.

A 100-YEAR-OLD WOMAN in Kogalym, Russia took up hunting because she was bored. She recently won a prize for being the best hunter in her area. Second prize went to her friend who is 90. Hunting powress is highly regarded in Kogalym. In awarding the prizes the mayor said: "They are true free spirits and we are happy to count them as among our own."

NO CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN THE WORLD CAN CLAIM more ancient roots than in Israel/Palestine, where there has been a continual presence since the time of Christ. However, in the last 60 years, the number of Palestinian Christians living in the area has dropped from as much as 40 percent of the population to only 2 percent. They have emigrated. It is feared by church leaders that Jerusalem and Bethlehem will "become a kind of Walt Disney Christian theme park," a tourist attraction without a real Christian presence.

THE SYNOD OF BISHOPS OF THE KYIV-HALYCH Metropolitate of the Ukrainian Greek Catholic Church issued a document saying that it would like to regulate liturgical life according to church teaching. It stresses the need for liturgical homogeneity.

(Continued from front page)
JOYFUL DAY

reveal. Jesus revealed the brightness of His glory to the disciples that day upon the mountain. Jesus' humanity and divinity exist together – Jesus is both human and divine. What He did revealed His divinity to the disciples. They already knew Him as a man. His divinity was always present; He just chose that moment to reveal it.

Within each of us there is a pure innocence that is closely related to God. We have the ability to love and love unconditionally. We have the ability for great acts of kindness and charity. We have within ourselves a great sense of fairness, justice and mercy. With all that we experience in life, it's no wonder that we might sometimes feel dirty and stained, but the beauty still exists within each of us. It is not something new or other worldly; it is something within that just needs to be revealed.

(Continued from front page)
THE LIGHT OF TRANSFIGURATION

anticipation of His Second Coming," says St. Basil: the moment which opened a perspective of eternity in time.

Vladimir Lossky

WINTER'S GRACE

Have you ever considered that it is possible to grow older but never old? As we grow older, we all have to cope with slowed-down reflexes, weaker vision, a slower step, and/or a hearing impairment. "Our outer nature is wasting away."

All the cosmetics, beauty creams and plastic surgery cannot hide this fact. They can't hide the liver spots and wrinkles. However, we should not allow wrinkles to form on our soul! We can do something about this.

It is told that a minister at a wedding made a mistake when he gave the groom his wedding vows. He asked, "Will you love, honor, and cherish her as long as you last?" His error became a moment of truth for all older people.

We should live as long as we last. Some people stop living when they have convinced themselves that they are old. We may grow older, but let us never grow old…in spirit, in activities, in memories, in love, in dreams and in relationships.

SHE FELL ASLEEP

Liturgically, the most important feast of the Mother of God is that of her Falling Asleep or Dormition. It is celebrated on August 15/29. Prior to this feast there is a two-week fast beginning on August 1/14.

Following the day of Pentecost, the Mother of God remained in Jerusalem cared for by St. John. She comforted the members of the forming Christian Church. By the time she had reached an advanced age, the apostles were scattered throughout the known world preaching the Gospel. When she died, they all returned for her burial to Jerusalem except for St. Thomas. He came late and asked to be taken to her tomb in Gethsemane where she had been buried near her parents. When the apostles took him there, they found that her tomb was empty, except her funeral clothes, which gave off a beautiful fragrance. However, she appeared to all of the apostles that evening and comforted them saying that she would always be with them.

In some parishes it is traditional to bless flowers and herbs. The blessing of these might have been because they were used for medicinal purposes and in remembrance of the flower fragrance in Mary's tomb.

CHURCH BREAD

Liturgical bread is made up of pure wheat flower knead with leaven or yeast. The bread must be fresh, and not stale. The necessity of using only wheaten bread is based on Christian tradition, which goes back to the very beginning of the Church. This necessity is also derived from the words of the Evangelist who, while describing the institution of the Holy Eucharist, says, "Jesus took bread…" *(Mk. 14:22).* Now, in the original Greek the word "bread" is given as "arthos" which means only wheaten bread. Besides this evidence, there is another one. Our Lord compares himself, his death and his burial as well as his resurrection to the grain of wheat, when He says: *"I solemnly assure you, unless the grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat. But if it dies, it produces much fruit" (Jn. 12:24).*

Eucharist bread is baked in a form of a small loaf. This loaf is called "prosphora" which means "an offering," i.e., a gift of love. In olden days not only Eucharist bread but also every gift given to the church was called a "prosphora." Before baking, a square seal is impressed on top of a prosphora, which has a cross and the initials of Christ: IC, XP, NI KA. Translated from Greek these initials mean: *"Jesus Christ conquers."* St. Constantine the Great saw in his miraculous vision this sign in the skies, and with it he gained victory over his enemies.

BRING ME ALL YOUR FLOWERS NOW

I would rather have a single rose
From the garden of a friend,
Than have the choicest flowers,
When my stay on earth must end.
I would rather have the kindest
words
Which may now be said to me,
Than flattered when my heart is
still –
And this life has ceased to be.
I would rather have a loving smile
From the friends I know are true,
Than tears shed 'round my casket,
When this world I've bade adieu!
Bring me all your flowers,
Whether pink, or white, or red.
I'd rather have one blossom now
THAN A TRUCKLOAD WHEN I'M
DEAD!

ST. JOHN THE END

The liturgical year comes to an end with the feast of the Beheading of St. John the Baptist. It is celebrated on August 29/September 11. The liturgical year begins on September 1/14.

The story of St. John is told quite clearly in the Scriptures. The story of his beheading can be read in Mark 6:14-30; Matt 14:1-12; and Luke 9:7-9. On this day at the Divine Liturgy the reading is from St. Mark and Acts 13:25-32.

The Gospel recounts how St. John denounced Herod for his unlawful living, his affair, with his brother's wife. His unwavering stand resulted in his beheading. He was unwilling to bend even for authority when it was wrong.

This is a very strict fast day. Besides this, it is a custom among many of our people not to eat from a flat plate or to eat anything that is round. Observing this custom emphasizes the feast day and makes it more memorable, especially for the children who are intrigued by the prohibitions.

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

1. Centuries before the shape of the earth was deemed not to be flat by Columbus and Magellan, the Bible stated that it was spherical in Isaiah 40:22. "It is he that sitteth upon the circle of the earth..."
2. Long before the astronauts had a glimpse of the earth hanging in empty space, in Job 26:7 it pointed out that it is suspended upon nothing? "He stretcheth out the north over the empty place, and hangeth the earth upon nothing."
3. At least 2,500 years before English physician William Harvey discovered the circulatory system in the human body, Proverbs 4:23 referred to the heart as a fountain, the source of life? "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."
4. Over 3,000 years ago, in Ecclesiastes 1:7, the Scripture described the earth's water cycle as part of the ecosystem that makes life on earth possible "All the rivers run into the sea; yet the sea is not full; unto the place from whence the rivers come, thither they return again."

There is a treasure trove of information vital to life just waiting for you to discover.

MARY AND MARTHA

The story of The Dormition of the Mother of God is not told in the Scriptures. The reading for the many days we commemorate her is always taken from Luke 10,38-42;11:27,28. This reading has to do with Mary and Martha, the two sisters of Lazarus, who often welcomed Jesus into their home.

When reading the passage, most people tend to identify with Martha rather than Mary. We admire hard-working people. We usually are not comfortable sitting down while somebody else is up and about. Conversation and entertainment are good at the proper time, but we feel this should take place after the meal, not before.

We certainly do not expect guests to do any work, so it was appropriate for Jesus to be in the living room relaxing and engaged in conversation. It was not His home; He was a guest. Mary, however, was not a guest. Had we been there, we might well have agreed that Martha was right, Mary should have been helping her in the kitchen, not making her do all the work.

Because we tend to identify with Martha, we can be a little put out with what Jesus said in the dispute between the sisters, Jesus came down on Mary's side, "Martha, Martha," He said. (Luke 10:41)

The double use of her name was intended to be a gentle rebuke. "Thou art careful and troubled about many things," Jesus said; "But one thing is needful: and Mary has chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her." (10:41-42)

We empathize with Martha, and we can understand how Jesus' gentle rebuke could have hurt her feelings. Still, this was Jesus who had rebuked her; and surely He knew what He was doing. He must have had reasons. We need to understand why He acted as He did.

There have been many reasons given. One has to do with gender relationships. I don't think I understood this point until I read "Yentl the Yeshiva Boy" about a girl who dresses as a boy in order to go to school. At the beginning of the story, we read that Yentl's father, who had been a shut-in for many bedridden years, had studied the Torah with his daughter as if she were a son. He told Yentl to lock the doors and to drape the windows, then together they poured over the Pentateuch (the first 5 books of the Old Testament, the Mishah, the Gemara, and the Commentaries).

Yentl's father had her lock the doors and drape the windows because in his culture the duties of the sexes were clearly defined. Women belonged in the kitchen. It was the men who studied the Law. It was considered shameful for a woman to do the things prescribed to men.

Martha may well have objected to Mary's presence in the living room with Jesus because it was not considered appropriate for a woman to be there.

Mary is described as one "which sat at Jesus' feet." (10:39) These were the words used to describe the posture of a student. While Martha thought her sister, Mary, should be in the kitchen with her, Jesus, to Martha's surprise, refused to exclude Mary from the conversation.

Being a woman apparently did not disqualify her from being His disciple.

We may take the path of Mary, but we sympathize with Martha.

Memories

For as long as I could remember, I wanted to travel. Maybe it was because of the wonderful stories I heard as a child about faraway places. I still recall my dad describing caribou on the Alaskan tundra and how Baba's face lit up when she talked about her home in a tiny village called Stupnitza. While my classmates found social studies boring, I couldn't wait to learn more about places I hoped to visit some day.

Many years passed before I started my journeys, but my desire to travel never wavered. I began that first trip alone and very nervous as I rode a "red, white, and blue" around JFK airport to get to my terminal. Shortly after I boarded the bus, what appeared to be a tour group also came on. A kind, middle-aged gentleman seemed to be in charge as he directed people to seats and handled their luggage. Since I was a woman seated alone (and, hopefully, looked safe), the man guided an older woman next to me. I'm quiet but friendly and attempted to engage the woman in conversation. I found out her name was Mary, she was 80 years old, and this was her first trip overseas. (Mine, too!) She was part of a church group visiting the Holy Land. As more people got on board, Mary stopped talking and appeared distressed. Then she put her hands over her ears and began to cry quietly. When she didn't respond to my questions of concern, I got the attention of the group's guide who came immediately. After some gentle coaxing, Mary tearfully stated the problem, "It's too loud!" Room was then made for her among those in her group who comforted her. As I observed them, I thought how blessed she was to have friends who would watch over her. Although there would be memorable experiences during their tour, there might also be mishaps. Mary would have her support system to help her cope with whatever might occur.

As for me, everything that could have gone wrong did – including lost luggage and minor injury. On my first night in a foreign city, I became lost. Cold, tired, hungry, and very much alone, I miserably wondered why I had ever wanted to travel. Then an "angel" appeared and safely guided me to my destination.

Although that trip was less than ideal, it still holds many happy memories because of the kindness of the people I met. I had always wanted to visit places but I discovered there is much more than historic buildings and beautiful vistas. Life's journey is truly enriched by the "angels" we meet along the way.

Margaret Pysarchyk

Send your MEMORIES to Margaret Pysarchyk, 2125 Garfield St., Lorain, OH 44055 or email at mypysarchyk@hotmail.com

BEHEADING OF SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST

Herod Antipas, son of the Herod who slew the young children in Bethlehem at the time of the birth of the Lord Jesus, was a ruler of Galilee when John the Baptist was preaching. This Herod was married to the daughter of Aretas, an Arabian prince. But Herod, an evil branch of evil stock, put away his lawful wife and took Herodias, his brother Philip's wife, to live with him while Philip was still alive. John the Baptist stood up against this lawlessness and strongly denounced Herod, at which Herod threw him into prison.

At the time of some feast at his court in Sebastia in Galilee, Salome, the daughter of Herodias and Philip, danced for the guests. Herod, in his cups and carried away by her dancing, promised her whatever she asked, even to the half of his kingdom. Instructed by her mother, she asked for the head of John the Baptist. Herod commanded that John be beheaded in the prison and his head brought on a platter. John's disciples took the body of their teacher by night and buried it, but Herod tore out John's tongue with a needle and then buried his head in an unclean place.

God's punishment was quickly visited upon this group of evildoers. Prince Aretas, to avenge his daughter's honour, attacked Herod with his army and brought him to his knees. The defeated Herod was condemned by the Roman Caesar, Caligula, to exile, first in Gaul and then in Spain. As exiles, Herod and Herodias lived in need and debasement until the earth opened and swallowed them up. Salome, Herodias' daughter, came to a bad end in the river Sikaris.

St. Nicholai

PRESS FUND

Thank you/Spasebo to all of you for your help in publishing The Orthodox Herald. It has become so much a part of my life and, as I found, so much of many of yours. Helping this month are: Robert and Martha Littlefield, Irene Allen, Dcn Ed and Alice Reta, Ethel Watlock, Paul Laskovich, Dr. Stephen Wartella, James Sivanich, Pauline Petronek, Helen Frazier, Ruth Larcom, Paul and Ann Baack, Anonymous, Sonya Naryshkin, MD, Anne Dorozynski.

*Ethel Skuby in memory of her husband Vladimir on 1st year since death

*Sandra Milosevich in memory of Fr. Feodor Kovalchuk, who died on April 22, 2008

*Matushka Nina Stroyen in memory of Matushka Mary Anne Bohush, her sister-in-law who died in July 2008, and her husband, Fr. W. Basil Stroyen, on 6th year since his death.

*Albert J. Burns in memory of his wife, Lilli, who died June 26, 2007.

LIGHTER MOMENT

"Doctor, tell me in plain words exactly what's wrong with me."

"Alright, in plain words, you are just plain lazy," said the doctor.

The patient hesitated a minute and then said, "Well now, maybe you better give me the medical term for that to tell my friends."

SOBORNOST

The Whole Body

Orthodox theology has always insisted that the truth and calling of a synod are not just the concern of an elite of specialist theologians or a group of bishops, but that on the contrary, the whole family of the baptized is involved and bears joint responsibility for them. For these decisions affect the whole people of God. The synod is summoned to study the problems and the needs of the whole people. The laity should therefore know what is going on and be well-informed. This obviously implies the need for a parallel education, adequate information and effective communication between the synod and the faithful. The synod is not an assembly behind closed doors, secret and mysterious.

Orthodoxy has never espoused the dichotomy and separation between a "teaching" Church had a "learning" Church (between *ecclesia docens* and *ecclesia discens).* The result of this distinction is often its presentation of an opposition between a more privileged directing Church and a directed and "obedient" Church, or again, between an "active" and a "passive" Church.

Metropolitan Emilianos (Timiadis) explains:

> To rightly understand the Orthodox position, some remarks must be made about the strictly sacredotal functions. The ministry as such is undoubtedly reserved to a few who have a special calling and a charism given them by their sacramental ordination. So, too, the pastoral charge is a responsibility which is not entrusted to all. All baptized members without distinction share in the life of faith, in the Eucharist, and thus become jointly responsible for the preservation of the faith, for its dissemination and defense against errors of all times, being all called to witness to the common faith, and because of their participation in the life of the Church must interest themselves in its health, in its problems, in the changes taking place and in the steps to be taken for its growth and stability.
>
> ...The truth must therefore be seen as the work of all Christians. The gospel is addressed to all and to each. For if we separate the *concilia* from the *praecepta* we shatter the unity of the Church. We must, however, distinguish very clearly between the functions of bishops – "judges of the faith" – and that of the laity – "defenders of the faith." Among the bishops there is a certain charism to guarantee the faith in its authenticity, but the defense of the faith is the business of the whole community. The Spirit of Truth dwells in the body of the baptized united by the bond of love. While it may normally find expression on the lips of those who have a charism for teaching, i.e. the bishops, it nevertheless strictly appertains to the Church as a body.

To summarize, we must distinguish between the preservation of the faith and the definition and proclamation of the faith. The truth is guarded by the whole Body, but it is the ministry alone which is authorized to bear authentic witness to the truth, based on a charismatic continuity of the Church which is ensured specifically by the apostolic succession.

At the heart of the mystery of this unanimity we find the fact that all the faithful together constitute the eucharistic community. They have the same root and center – Christ. The Eucharist establishes an authentic community among them, just as long ago the Sinai covenant created the people of Israel. St. Augustine's comment is appropriate here: "Who could fail to be impressed by such a congruence and at the same time such a distance?"

Fr. Michael Dahulich, PhD
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Undique (from everywhere)

Contextualizing the gospel today is as hard as it's ever been. We live among people who hear the message not as good news but as yesterday's news, or as news only for "religious people." There are many people in our culture who, as Isaiah wrote long ago, are "ever hearing, but never understanding...ever seeing, but never perceiving."

Why don't kids do chores anymore? I've yet to see a single kid out mowing a lawn. I see teams of lawn-maintenance workers neatly tending lawns – but no kids. It's not just lawns, I don't recall seeing any kids raking leaves in the fall. And not a single kid has stopped by our house offering to shovel the snow off the driveway. I've never heard my son's friends complaining about the chores they're charged with after school or on weekends. I don't blame the kids, I blame the parents.

How many times have we felt the urge to help someone – and balked at the notion? We fail to remember that we are God's hands on earth – created both to receive help and to give it. A helping hand can lighten another's burden.

Maramoresh dobri varesh, v nyom i dobri zhiti. Ni dyakovi ni popovi ne treba platiti.

I used to think, "What a nice person I am! So many wicked things I didn't do!" But now that I have older grown, I sigh to think of the many good things I didn't do. I fear my greatest sins were not made from commission but were made from negligence and by omission.

As I studied the Scriptures it became increasingly clear to me that everything the prophets and Apostles did – whether it was preaching, teaching, evangelism, good deeds or fellowship – was done pervaded by praise and worship of God.

You can spend decades going to Divine Liturgies every Sunday and still not plumb all the rich, symbolic depths of meaning found in that ceremony.

Mount Athos has been a known refuge to Orthodox hermits since the 6th and 7th centuries. In 885 A.D. Byzantine emperor Basil I officially declared it the "exclusive domain of monks and hermits."

Editor's Notes

It is six years since Fr. Basil died. I am giving this as a time frame for the problems of administration facing the OCA. Several years before he died, he was concerned about the way the Church was heading. He was punished for trying to bring attention to the problems that he saw and the consequences he felt they would bring. His analyses have proved to be accurate. Those with whom he had shared them often call me and are amazed on how accurate he was.



Now, as I am given information on the situation including printouts from the internet, I am saddened by the accusations, the ignorance and the mean spiritness of much that is being circulated. Too often remarks are being made which clearly show that the writer has little knowledge of the church history and especially that of the church in the U.S.

The problem, especially in its acute stage, has dragged on much too long. According to church tradition, a meeting (sobor) of clergy and laity has been called to try to settle – what?

Perhaps, it is time to turn to St. Ephraim's prayer and really concentrate on the words and add it to our daily prayer rule so that we are in the proper mode to make conclusions.

We are fortunate to still have some priests and laymen for whom the history of the church is not academic – they have lived it. Why is their wisdom not being solicited?

One such was honored by his peers – the Alumni Association of St. Tikhon's Theological Seminary. Fr. John Govrusik is one of the oldest graduates of the seminary. Remarkably, he still is in active service to God. He not only has his own parish, he is concerned about the Orthodox members of several very small parishes. He holds several services every Sunday. I was impressed at his knowledge of the church, its early leaders and its division into Belorus, Carpathian and Galician/Lemko parishes. I was also impressed by his concern for each individual in his flock. He stated that "each one is a child of God." Axios - Fr. John.

August is full of feast days when beautiful traditions are practiced in the church. Please, parents, let your children fix a basket of fruit for blessing on the Transfiguration of Our Lord, take a flower or herbs on the Dormition and hold the fast traditions of the Beheading of St. John by using no flat plates. It is sad to see so few children in church during the summer. Are they being taught by example that church is like school with semesters?

"Mir prosim." We ask for peace.

God be with you,

Matushka Nina

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ALASKA: Boris Gontcharenko, Anonymous, Ethel Watlock

MISSION: Anna Semanitzky

BOTH ALASKA AND MISSION: Sonya Naryshkin, MD, Robert and Martha Littlefield, Dcn Ed and Alice Reta, Ann Worobey, James Sivanich, Pauline Petronek

POSTAGE: Pauline Petronek, Anna Moran, Gregory Speros, James Sivanich, Mary Chupak, Harold Homyak, Dcn Ed and Alice Reta, Robert and Martha Littlefield, Tom Keklak, Sonya Naryshkin, MD, Eleanor Skuby in memory of husband Vladimir on the first anniversary of his death.

LIGHTER MOMENT

One morning a businessman's secretary was showing off her stunning new tailored suit, a birthday present from her parents. Her boss stopped to admire it and then went on into his private office to greet a client who was waiting to see him. "Sorry to keep you waiting," he told the client, "but I was just admiring my secretary in her birthday suit."



One year when our tour group met at the Stroyen spot near the arch at St. Tikhon's Monastery on Memorial Day, Helen Lesko brought the most delicious Lemon Squares which she shared. Since then, I have made them and found that the tartness goes well with food from the grill.

LEMON SQUARES

CRUST
- 2 cups all-purpose flour
- 1/2 cup confectioners' sugar
- 2 sticks (1 cup) cold, unsalted butter, cut up
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1/4 tsp. salt

FILLING
- 2 cups granulated sugar
- 2 Tbsp. cornstarch
- 5 large eggs, at room temperature
- 1 Tbsp. freshly grated lemon peel
- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- 2 Tbsp. unsalted butter, melted
- 1/2 tsp. salt

Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. Heat oven to 350°F. Line a 13x9-in. pan with nonstick foil, letting foil extend about 2 in. above ends of pan.

2. Crust: Put flour, confectioners' sugar, butter, vanilla and salt in food processor; pulse until small crumbs form. With lightly floured fingers, pat over bottom of prepared pan. Bake 18 minutes or until pale golden.

3. Filling: Beat sugar and cornstarch in a large bowl with mixer to blend. Beat in eggs 1 at a time, beating well after each. Add lemon peel and juice, butter and salt; beat until well blended. Pour over crust. Bake 20 to 25 minutes until set. Cool completely. Refrigerate 1 hour.

4. Dust with confectioners' sugar. Lift foil by ends to a cutting board. Cut in 24 squares.

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BIBLE STUDY

Corinth, to whom St. Paul sent his letters, was a great commercial city. It was the meeting place of the old Eastern and Western world. It was famous equally for its wealth, its treasures of art, and its gross sensuality. In some ways it resembled the modern Las Vegas. In the Apostolic period when these letters were written, it was composed of a large mixed population of Romans, Greeks, and Jews.

St. Paul's first visit to Corinth is described in Acts 18. He lived here for 18 months (in the years 52, 53) supporting himself by his specialty of tent-making all the while doing his mission work on every Sabbath day. He managed to organize a large Christian Church during this time. The ruler of the Synagogue, Crispus, was one of his convert members.

After St. Paul left, problems arose. In the space of five years, the people were divided into religious factions. The Corinthians appear to have written to St. Paul, consulting him on points of Church order. Interestingly enough, they did not mention the "loose" living that was occurring among its members.

St. Paul replied to their letter by writing the First Epistle early in the year 57 during the Passover season. In it he answered the questions sent to him and at the same time he wrote against the spiritual corruptions which abounded in the Corinthian Church.

His second Epistle was probably written at the end of the same year. St. Paul had been anxiously waiting for a reply to his first letter. Finally, he heard from Titus that most of the people had followed the directions which he had given in his first letter. However, there were some holdouts who did not acknowledge his authority.

Money troubles reared their ugly head. Yes, as far back as the year 57. A collection was being made in the churches to help the poor Christians of Palestine. Many of the Corinthians gladly helped, but others insinuated that St. Paul was pushing the collection because he was going to use it for his own good. So, in this second letter, the Apostle gives both praise and blame. He addresses both the loyal majority and the rebellious minority or troublemakers.

If we read these two Epistles carefully, we will get a glimpse of the scene of the Apostolic Church as it was being formed. We get a picture of them worshipping and see that while some prayed with sincere devotion, others were infected with human doubts and vanities. On the one hand we read of the heathen auditor pierced to the heart by the inspired eloquence of the Christian prophets when the secrets of his conscience were laid bare to him until he felt the need to fall down on his face and worship God. We can hear the fervent thanksgiving echoed by the unanimously shouted Amen (Let it be so). We can read of the receiving of Holy Communion ending with the feast of Love. Again, we become familiar with the problems of domestic life, the nearness of heathen immorality which can so easily corrupt and the misunderstanding of what Christian liberty is all about so that it is perverted.

Home Bible Reading Schedule

AUGUST 2008

1. 1 Cor 7:35-40,8:7	**17. 1 Cor 3:9-17**
2. Romans 12:1-3	18. 1 Cor 15:12-19
3. Romans 15:1-7	19. 1 Cor 15:29-35
4. 1 Cor 9:13-18	20. 1 Cor 16:1-12
5. 1 Cor 10:1-12	21. 2 Cor 1:1-2
6. 1 Cor 10:12-22	22. 2 Cor 1:12-20
7. 1 Cor 10:28-11:8	23. Romans 15:30-33
8. 1 Cor 11:8-23	**24. 1 Cor 4:9-16**
9. Romans 13:1-10	25. 2 Cor 2:3-11
10. 1 Cor 1:10-17	26. 2 Cor 2:14-3:3
11. 1 Cor 11:31-12:6	27. 2 Cor 3:4-11
12. 1 Cor 12:12-26	28. 2 Cor 4:1-12
13. 1 Cor 13:4-14:5	29. 2 Cor 4:13-18
14. 1 Cor 14:6-19	30. 1 Cor 1:3-9
15. 1 Cor 14:26-40	**31. 1 Cor 9:2-12**
16. Romans 14:6-9	

THE CLOCK OF LIFE

"The clock of life is wound but once,
And no man has the power
To tell just when the hands will stop,
At late or early hour.

NOW is the only time you own;
Live, love, toil with a will
Place no faith in 'tomorrow,' for
The clock may then be still."

(Ephesians 5:14-17)